

FROM MARK SANDOZ

TANWORTH IN ADEW
WORKS.

Dear Annette Kuhn &
Valentina Bold.

In response to your request for cinema-goers
of the 30's. I was 10 years old then + already
a hardened cinema goer!
I've tried to remember all the cinemas
in our segment of B'ham city where
we lived, bear in mind we were very
insular in those days, in as much we
were more or less confined to the tram
route + minus a few hundred yards
either side! So, on the south of B'ham
in a segment, there were 36 cinemas
but available to me were possibly 10
(because of the tram route).

As you probably know cinemas operated
Mon. Tues Wed./Thurs. Fri SAT. with
change of programme twice weekly.

Sunday cinema started about the middle 30's.

Admission charges were 1930, for Kids 95-15-16
matinee (not Sat mornings) 2 pence in old
money ($\frac{1}{6}$ th of 5P. today!) later it was 6 pence
for adults. And eventually about 1935?
7P for Sunday evening performances.
which commenced at 7-9.15 or so.

Programmes consisted of supporting picture,
Moreton News and the BIG picture!

My first recollection of the cinema is
seeing 'Felix the Cat' cartoon when I was
about 3 years old (Wot a memory!)

But up to the war years and later
the cinema was great escapism, don't
forget the majority of people hadn't even
got a wireless (radio) let alone T.V.

I remember going to the 'Triangle Cinema'
[so called, because it was triangular
and steeply raked] quite regularly on
Sat. matinees and when the lady
pianist arrived, complete with cloche
hat and always carrying a lino-cloth
shopping bag, she was always

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Greeted with a great roar from the scruffy kids! Before the performance the uniformed commissioner came round with a brass spray, which engulfed the audience in a perfumed disinfectant mist! I could never understand this, maybe 'cause occasionally on arriving home one was covered in flea-bites. No wonder this cinema was called the 'flea pit'!

I think 'talkies' came in about 1930. With Al Jolson in the 'Singing Fool', I remember seeing this, and wasn't terribly impressed, I think the film went out of sync with the large dia. disc, from (used in those days) time to time. Within a few hundred yards of this cinema, was the 'Alhambra' Cinema, so called becos it was designed like the Alhambra Palace in Granada, complete with painted ceiling like the sky etc.

95-65-16

Quite a few cinemas in the suburbs
always had a manager to greet the
customers wearing evening dress also a
uniformed commissionaire to keep the
queues in order. Altho' continuous
performances were in vogue just pre-
war, complete with variety acts
as well!

As kids we didn't go for all the sloppy
romantic stuff like 'Camille' with Greta
Garbo - preferring Tom Mix, Ken Maynard
etc. and comedies featuring Ben Turpin.
Harry Langdon B Keaton & of course
Laurel & Hardy. Our fave (with Alfalfa)
The Dead End Kids (Frankie Darro)
I remember seeing 'The King of Jazz' with
Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra, with
John Boles? A great innovation, part in
colour if I remember rightly - I almost
forget old Charlie Chaplin in the 'Gold Rush'
Best wishes with your project.

Could keep on, but hope you can
decipher these ramblings
Still going to the local B Screen

Mark
Sandoz